



State Senator
Deb Cherry
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Your Opinions Matter

I want to hear your thoughts on issues that are important to our community.
 I have put together two different types of venues that will allow us to dialogue:

Coffee Hours

The informal, casual atmosphere will give me an opportunity to have a cup of coffee and chat with you. The schedule is as follows:

Monday, March 1, 2004 - Waterford
 Big Apple Restaurant
 4780 Dixie Highway
 7:30-9 a.m.

Friday, March 19, 2004
 Mt. Morris Township Hall
 5447 Bicentennial Parkway
 7:30-9 a.m.

Check my website for updated coffee hours.



Town Hall Meetings

I will also host two townhall-style meetings to listen to your concerns. Please make note of the following information:

Monday, March 8, 2004 - Waterford
 Covert Center
 1150 Scott Lake Road • 7-9 p.m.

Subject: “What You Want Your Mental Health Commission to Know”

Monday, April 19, 2004 – Burton
 Burton Police and Fire
 Administration Training Room
 4090 Manor Drive • 7-8:30 p.m.

Subject: Open Forum

E-Mail Newsletter Available



I am currently sending out periodic e-mail newsletters to keep you informed about what's going on in Lansing, as well as other important information from around the state. If you would like to receive this newsletter, please send your e-mail address to

sendcherry@senate.michigan.gov

and I'll be sure to add you to our mailing list.

Please also visit my State Senate website,

www.senate.mi.gov/cherry

which will keep you up to date on my activities in Lansing as well as in the district.

State Senator • Deb Cherry news

02/04

For The Constituents of the 26th District



A Note From Senator Cherry

While Michigan is on the road to fiscal recovery, we must successfully deal with the remnants of a recession that cut us deeply. Under the leadership of Governor Jennifer Granholm, we balanced the 2004 budget through conscientious cost reductions.

We will need more of the same in the coming year. All Michiganders will be called upon to make their dollars work in more creative ways.

As a lawmaker, I am committed to preserving services and education expenditures that are vitally important to the state. However, I will continue to identify areas that can withstand a little more trimming.

Federal help is available, but in small quantities. The states are virtually left to their own devices to close financial gaps. I ask you, my constituents, to take a deep breath with me as we collectively sacrifice for the greater good of our state.

Financial strength is on the horizon. We can reach it if we stick together and fastidiously follow our budget as directed by the Governor. Our schools, families, and social agencies will be leaner and stronger as a result.

Deb Cherry

Deb Cherry • State Senator • 26th District

Children: Go Outside and Play, Really!

I recently introduced a bill that would require Michigan schools to provide 135 minutes of physical education per week for all students.

One-quarter of Michigan's children and youth are overweight and 11 percent of them are considered to be obese, according to the Michigan Fitness organization.

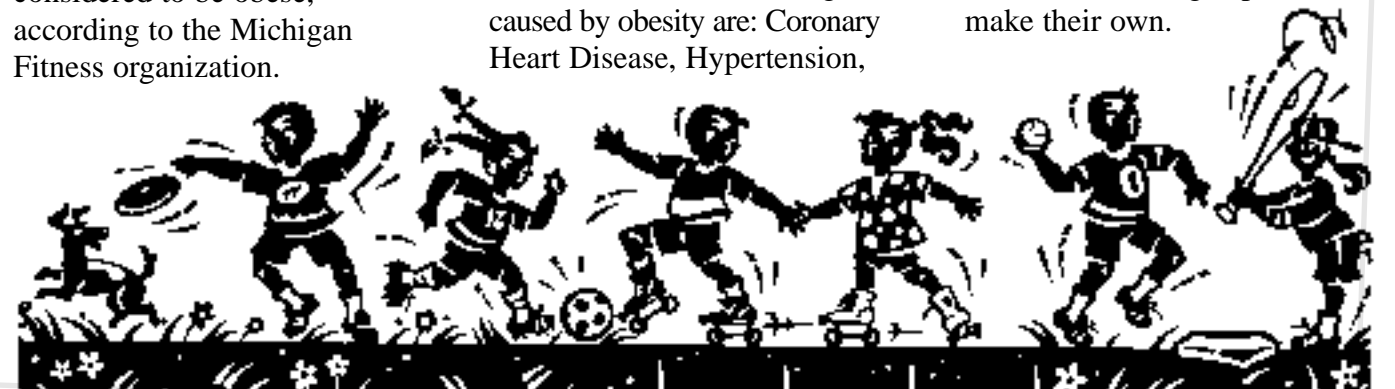
These children are people we know—our neighbors, our family, and our friends.

We must approach the issue of obesity from every angle in order to help our kids. Acknowledging this will better equip us to meet their needs.

Some health challenges caused by obesity are: Coronary Heart Disease, Hypertension,

Osteoporosis, Cancer, Diabetes, and Asthma.

Physical fitness counters these ailments and also contributes to improved psychological well being. I believe that there must be a concerted effort to promote healthy lifestyles that children can grasp and make their own.



How To Contact Me

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Clip and Save

Health Caucus to Crush Chronic Illness

Recognizing the fiscal impact of chronic illnesses, a bi-partisan group of legislators and I formed the Healthy Michigan Caucus. Supported by Michigan’s first Surgeon General, Dr. Kimberlydawn Wisdom, and the Department of

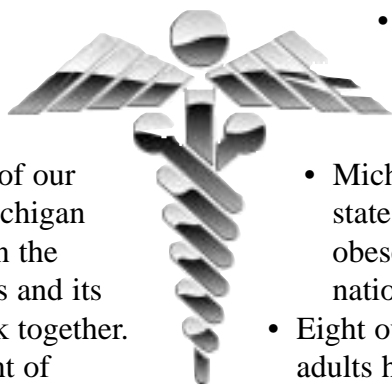


Community Health, the caucus plans to promote healthy lifestyles that will lead to a healthier economy.

In Michigan, treatment of chronic diseases accounts for 65 to 70 percent of our health care costs. Michigan can lead the nation in the health of its residents and its budget if we all work together.

The Department of Community Health’s Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Control released these sobering facts:

- Cardiovascular Disease is the #1 cause of death among Michigan adults.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Michigan.
- Smoking is responsible for 90 percent of all instances of lung cancer.



- More than 1 million Michigan adults have diabetes or pre-diabetes.
- Asthma is the leading cause of preventable hospitalizations in Michigan.
- Michigan is the fattest state, having the most obese residents in the nation.
- Eight out of ten Michigan adults have a least one risk factor for chronic disease.

Residents who are interested in learning more about risk factors for chronic diseases or how to begin their journey to better health can visit the Michigan Department of Community Health’s website at www.michigan.gov/mdch, and click on the “Physical Health & Prevention” link.

Cleaning for Safety

Nature will soon undergo a fresh start and so will homeowners who are ready to clean up the debris that has been accumulating in basements, storage sheds, and garages over the winter.

- Household and pool chemicals, paints, and poisons should be properly marked and stored under lock and key, away from children’s reach. Dispose of any that are leaking, expired, or that look bad.
- When cleaning up hazardous chemicals, wear rubber gloves and follow the safety directions on the packaging. Never mix chemicals in the same container. If you don’t know how to dispose of them, seek outside advice. Never put them in the trash or pour them down the drain.
- Make sure gasoline and cleaning fluids are well-marked and stored in a cool, dry place away from the house and out of reach of children

and pets. Use only approved containers for gasoline storage.

- Never use gasoline to clean skin, clothes, auto parts, or floors.
- Clean up work areas. Put dangerous tools, adhesives, matches, or other work items away from children’s reach.
- Check your barbecue grill for leaks and cracks, and be sure to store any propane tanks away from your house and garage.
- Remove all fire hazards, including stacks of rags, newspapers, and magazines. Pay special attention to the spaces around your furnace, hot water tank, fireplace, space heaters, and dryer, as well as under your stairs.

Honorable Mention

Genesee County’s *Mott Middle College* received an honorable mention during Gov. Granholm’s State of the State address. The college offers a program that helps individuals who have dropped out of high school not only earn their GED, but gain college credits as well.

Congratulations *Mott Middle College*; let’s keep Michigan moving forward!

Gov. Granholm also lauded *The Flint Health Care Employment Opportunities Program*. The organization is a consortium of business, labor, education, and community groups that directs unemployed Michiganders to training and jobs in health care. This program also helps hospitals hire medical care workers.

As a result of this group’s efforts, the Governor proposed that 12 such alliances be created across the state.

Senator Cherry’s Hunter Safety Classes to Start in Spring

I am pleased to announce that my 8th Annual Hunter Safety classes will be held in May. Classroom study is scheduled for May 3 & 5 at Grand Blanc High School from 6-9 p.m. Range training is set for May 8, 8 a.m.-12 noon, at the Grand Blanc Huntman’s Club.



To register, please call my office at (866) 305-2126 or visit my web page at www.senate.mi.gov/cherry to register on line. Those who complete both class work and field training will receive certificates of completion from the Department of Natural Resources, facilitator of the event.

A Home Built With Love

I joined with volunteers from the Genesee County Young Democrats to build a home for a family in Flint. The new home owner and her three children pitched in to help build their new house. I, like Habitat for Humanity, want to ensure safe, decent, and affordable housing for those in need.



Tax Credits and You

The Earned Income Tax Credit Initiative has begun its second year promoting awareness about federal tax credits available to working people in Michigan. This tax credit is available to low- and moderate-income individuals.

The tax credit can either provide refunds up to a maximum dollar amount or decrease the amount of taxes due to the IRS. The Earned Income Tax Credit is refundable,

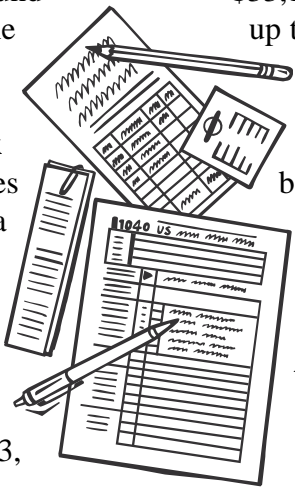
which means that a household can receive a tax refund above and beyond the household’s tax bill.

An individual is eligible for the tax credit even if no taxes are owed; however, a federal tax return must be filed.

For example: a family raising more than one child in their home in 2003,

with earned income less than \$33,178, could get a tax credit up to \$4,140.

The tax credit group is sponsoring a number of tax preparation sites that will be staffed by volunteers who will help you navigate through the tax preparation process. They have received IRS training. See the locations listed below:



Genesee and Oakland County Tax Preparation Sites • Feb 1 - April 15

Burton Place

2287 S. Center Road - Burton
Hours: As needed • (810) 742-2030

Burton Senior Citizens Center

3410 S. Grand Traverse Street - Burton
Hours: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. • (810) 744-0960

Grand Blanc Senior Center

12632 Pagels Drive - Grand Blanc
Hours: Wednesdays, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
(810) 695-3202

Krapol Senior Center

5472 Bicentennial Drive - Mt. Morris
Hours: Mon.-Weds. by appointment only
(810) 785-2270

Forest Township Hall

130 E. Main Street - Otisville
Hours: Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. • (810) 631-4997

Davison Senior Center

334 Main Street - Davison
Hours: Wednesdays, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. • (810) 658-1566

Clio Senior Center

2080 W. Vienna Road - Clio
Hours: Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. • (810) 687-7260

Lakeland Place

2700 Elizabeth Lake Road - Waterford
Hours: Wednesdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
(248) 682-3122

Whispering Woods

1450 Whispering Woods Drive - Waterford
Hours: Wednesdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. • (248) 363-2775

Waterford Senior Center

6455 Harper - Waterford
Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
(248) 623-6500